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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

POPULATION

Bertram, G. C. L. *Population Trends and the World's Biological Resources*. Occasional Papers on Eugenics, Number Five. London, 1949. Cassell and The Eugenics Society. Pp. 38. Price 2s.

THE author is well known to us for his papers dealing with population and food supply and allied problems. In this pamphlet he paints a broad picture of the present position in the world at large, and the picture is not an encouraging one. He opens with a quotation of a pronouncement by Sir John Boyd Orr, to the effect that the human race may possibly, but only possibly, solve the food problem, and that if it is not solved "there will be chaos in the world in the next fifty years." We have the idea forcibly put before us of an underfed world, a world of limited food resources with a human population greatly on the increase, a world that now supports, with difficulty, a total human population more than twice as large as it was in the year 1800, a population which now appears to be increasing at the rate of about twenty millions each year.

So much for the debit side. On the credit side we must put the awareness of the condition of things by many writers on demographic subjects, with the result that a part

of the public knows that a problem exists. Mr. Bertram has a section on "Helpful Factors," including some paragraphs on increased areas of cultivation; and it is interesting to note that under this heading he rightly draws particular attention to the great irrigation system of India, covering some 70 million acres, or more than a hundred thousand square miles—not the least of the many benefits of past British rule. The author then deals with improvements in technique and the development of fisheries.

"The Hindering Factors," as described by the author are individual outlook, tradition and organization, personal choice of food, land degradation and irrational exploitation. He mentions specially a book published ten years ago by G. V. Jacks and R. O. Whyte, entitled *Rape of the Earth*, a world survey of soil erosion; also two more recent books, Vogt's *Road to Survival* and Fairfield Osborn's *Our Plundered Planet*.

The author is not afraid to mention Malthus, whose ideas were neglected and discredited largely on account of the expansion of area and population caused by "the throwing open to the world of the immense potentialities of the Americas." It is remarked that "there are far more people in the world to-day than can adequately be provided for by the amount of food available." He does not accept the suggestion that

the world might be able to support a larger population in reasonable comfort. But, anyway, forecasts of the state of the world in a distant future are not very profitable, and we know a good deal about our own difficulties in this island which are not likely to disappear in the near future.

India has been mentioned; there is a general agreement that increasing population pressure is resulting in a reduction of the already meagre amount of food available for the mass of the people. Mr. Bertram has some remarks which are much to the point as to the physical impossibility of keeping the population of India stationary by means of migration.

There is a sensible paragraph about a possible redistribution of the peoples of the British Commonwealth. And there is a brief discussion of the question of an optimum population, ending with the remark that there is presumably an optimum age structure. It may be hoped that this is not a hint that some of us live too long!

This Occasional Paper is a useful outline sketch of the present state of discussion of a vitally important subject.

C. F. ARDEN-CLOSE.

ANTHROPOLOGY

Hooton, Earnest Albert. *Up from the Ape*. Revised edition. New York, 1946, and London, 1948. Macmillan. Pp. xii + 788. Price 25s.

THE new edition of this well-known treatise, which first appeared in 1931 and the title of which by no means indicates its formidable scope, is very welcome. Professor Hooton's gift of synthesizing the often abstruse materials of physical anthropology and human biology and presenting them in easily assimilated form for the inquiring layman and the student alike remains as prodigious as ever. One could wish occasionally for a less flippant attitude towards the subject than that expressed in sectional headings and footnotes, because the interest of the text is absorbing enough to dispense with strained gaiety in the one and instances of

poor versification (not the author's), even by undergraduate standards, in the other.

The book is divided into six parts: Man's Relations; The Primate Life Cycle; The Individual Life Cycle; Fossil Ancestors and Collaterals; Heredity and Race; and The Anthropometry of the Individual, and, besides an excellent bibliography, contains an appendix on the elements of anthropometry with useful hints on sexing and ageing skeletal remains. Readers of Professor Hooton's *Man's Poor Relations** will be aware of his able digest of the scattered literature relating to subhuman primates, and the fruits of this study have been incorporated in the first two parts of the present work. In the second of them appears a balanced discussion of one of the crucial problems of anthropogenesis. Is man, with his upright stance, derived from a common ape-human stock which was arboreal and practised brachiation, or were his ancestors pronograde ground-dwellers which, unlike the apes, forebore from returning to the trees? The position Professor Hooton adopts, details of which must be sought in his pages, is a compromise between these two opposed views.

Part III of the book considers embryology, growth, adolescence, maturity and procreation, senescence and death, with comments on sexual differences in man and other higher primates and a terse but lucid description of the oestrous cycle in the latter. Part IV deals with reinterpretations of old evidence and recent developments in the field of palæontology, not omitting that of the catarrhine monkeys and apes. Like the writer of this review, Professor Hooton felt that the case for the antiquity of the Galley Hill skeleton was a strong one. Flourine tests carried out on the bones during the past eighteen months, however, have shown such an opinion to be incorrect. The Baker's Hole skull, apparently a real "ancient modern," is not mentioned by the author, doubtless owing to the scanty attention that has been accorded it by specialists. There is a brief account of von Koenigswald's remarkable finds of giant hominids in Java and southern

* New York, Doubleday, 1942.